




April 8, 2011

IFYI HIGHLIGHTS

- Contact Center Feedback
- Termination of Water and Sewer Agreement
- Redistricting Timeline Update
- Boarded-up Houses
- Economic Development List of Bond Projects
- Radio System Subscriber Product Leasing
- Fair Housing Month Program
- Farmers' Curb Market RFP Update

TO: Mayor and Members of Council

FROM: Rashad M. Young, City Manager 

SUBJECT: Items for Your Information

Contact Center Feedback

Attached is the weekly report generated by our Contact Center for the week of March 29 – April 3, 2011.

Redistricting Timeline Update

At the April 5, 2011, City Council Meeting, Council held a public hearing to receive public comment on amendments to the electoral district boundaries. As a reminder, if Council does plan to revise existing Council Districts, it would be best for Council to review and approve plans by the first meeting in May to ensure enough time for Department of Justice (DOJ) review and approval prior to the opening of the electoral filing period. The DOJ typically uses the entire allowed 60 days to review plans. Please note the filing period opens July 25, 2011, for City of Greensboro City Council elections. It was previously reported that the filing period for At-Large candidates was July 1 - July 15, 2011, however, the Guilford County Board of Elections confirmed that the filing period for both at-large and district candidates is July 25, 2011.

Release of PL94-171 population data	March 3, 2011
Council adoption of new boundaries	May 3, 2011
Submission and review of a City adopted plan by the DOJ. The DOJ traditionally uses the entire 60-day review period.	May 9, 2011 through July 8, 2011
Receipt of the DOJ pre-clearance approval	July 11, 2011
Filing period opens for Council elections	July 25, 2011 through August 12, 2011
Subsequent primary and the general elections	October 11, 2011 and November 8, 2011

Termination of Water and Sewer Agreement

As a follow-up to the discussion regarding the termination of the Water / Sewer Trust Fund at the April 5, 2011, Work Session, attached is a memorandum from Deputy City Manager Robert Morgan, dated April 8, 2011, containing our recommendation for resolving all remaining issues with the dissolution of the Water / Sewer Trust Fund.

Boarded-up Housing

As a follow-up to a request from Councilmember Vaughan, at the February 1, 2011, City Council meeting, attached is a memorandum from Interim Director of Planning and Community Development Sue Schwartz, dated April 7, 2011, providing a comparison of the City's current process related to boarded-up housing to four other comparable cities.

Economic Development List of Bond Projects

As a follow-up to a request from Councilmember Thompson, at the April 5, 2011, City Council Work Session, attached is a memorandum from Economic Development Manager John Shoffner, dated April 7, 2011, providing an update of economic development bond projects.

Radio System Subscriber Product Leasing

Attached is a memorandum from Wesley Reid, Director of Guilford Metro 911, dated March 30, 2011, providing an update on the process of the phased out 800 MHz portable and mobile radios and the decision to lease rather than purchase new radios.

Fair Housing Month Program

April is Fair Housing Month and the Human Relations Department and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) are sponsoring a Fair Housing Month program on Monday, April 18, 2011. The day's events, which are free and open to the public, will begin at 8:30 am at the International Civil Rights Center and Museum, 134 S. Elm Street in downtown Greensboro.

The program will feature a keynote address by HUD Deputy Secretary Ron Sims who is nationally recognized for his work in homelessness, urban development, and affordable housing. The program also includes an afternoon fair housing training session that will cover the Fair Housing Act and the Greensboro Fair Housing Ordinance. It is open to residential sellers, renters, lenders, insurance providers, appraisers, and anyone involved in housing-related transactions and/or interested in fair housing laws.

Farmers' Curb Market RFP Update

Attached is a memorandum from Parks and Recreation Department Director Greg Jackson, dated April 8, 2011, providing an update on the Farmers' Curb Market Request for Proposals (RFP) Review Committee, which will interview the three shortlisted proposer on Tuesday, April 26, 2011.

RMY/mm

**Public Affairs Department
Contact Center Weekly Report
Week of 3/28/11- 4/3/11**

Contact Center

4346 calls answered this week

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Top 5 calls by area

Water Resources

Balance Inquiry– 1021
New Sign up – 251
Bill Extension – 183
Cutoff Requests – 124
Pay by Phone – 116

Field Operations

Bulk Guidelines – 89
Transfer/HHW – 65
Repair Can/Garbage – 35
No Service/Yard Waste – 35
Collection Day – 35

All others

Police/Watch Operations – 227
Courts/Sheriff - 79
Police Records – 41
Privilege License – 33
Parks & Rec./Administration – 26

Comments

We received a total of **9** comments this week:

Field Operations – 5 comments:

- Styrofoam blew out of truck on to the roadway. Driver stopped and picked all this up from the road. Citizen saw this and wanted to say thank you to the driver.
- Customer says we are terrific, appreciates the service she gets.
- Resident wanted to extend a special thank you for assistance from the Contact Center regarding leaf collection at his location.
- Customer said she called and complained about the condition of Hornaday Rd after the city had finished working on a water line. She wants to thank us for paving the road. Thought she should call back and thank us since she called and complained.
- Customer is very impressed with the supervisors and crews who respond to his various concerns (potholes, signals, etc.) and states that the City of Greensboro is drastically faster in responding to his concerns than anywhere else he has been. Wanted to thank the city for doing a great job.

GDOT – 1 comment:

- Along Lovett St, customer wanted to communicate to the city her disapproval of the lack of sidewalks along this road in relation to the large amount of pedestrians she sees compared to most other areas which actually do have sidewalks. She witnessed an elderly man in an automated wheelchair trying to make it up the street while mothers walked their children up the street. Seeing these individuals without the safety and convenience of a sidewalk made her upset enough to want to reach out and express her displeasure.

Public Affairs – 1 comment:

- Customer suggests that we put something in the water resources flyer about people pulling their cans back from the street once they've been emptied, feels that people need another reminder.

Water Resources – 2 comments:

- Customer thinks the wording on the water bill needs to be changed.
- Customer not happy with the wording of the due date on her statement. She said it is confusing and that the statement should not give a false due date. "Something needs to be done to change this information."

Overall

We received the normal variety of calls last week. Call volume was busy through the end of the week.

April 8, 2011

TO: Rashad M. Young, City Manager

FROM: Robert W. Morgan, Deputy City Manager

SUBJECT: Termination of Water and Sewer Agreement

As you know the City received a letter from the County on March 16, 2011 concerning our request for Extra Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ). In this letter the County explained that the Commissioners could not agree to the City's proposal but expressed a willingness to discuss a comprehensive planning approach for water and sewer extensions outside the City. The County also requested a response from the City as to whether the City Council would agree to fund out of the Trust Fund four remaining projects. We believe we have a viable counter proposal that could address all outstanding issues.

As it relates to the four outstanding projects, they include:

1. Trosper Road-Griffin Mill Road Project. Phase I and II of this project were funded at \$613,775.00. This was completed on May 14, 2007 and deducted from the Trust Fund after that date. The County has an additional request for Phase III of this project to be funded out of the Trust at an anticipated cost of \$304,000.00.
2. Southeast Middle and High School. The cost of this project was \$560,311.00. This was approved by the County on July 23, 2009 and deducted from the Trust Fund.
3. Forest Oaks Estates Water and Sewer, and Lynwood Lakes Water and Sewer. The County approved these projects to be financed from 2/3 Water and Sewer Bonds at a cost of \$5,505,992. The current estimate is \$9,662,870.

We could agree to use trust fund resources for the Trosper Road and Southeast Middle and High School. We also could support funding the difference between appropriated bond funds and current estimates for Forest Oaks and Lynwood Lakes subdivisions provided that the petition that authorized these projects to be built remain valid and that the projects actually move forward and are constructed. We would further propose that these projects must be under contract within 12 months in order to continue to obligate Trust Fund dollars.

We also would propose that the independent audit of the Trust Fund be initiated within 30 days of the County's concurrence in principal of this proposal and funds dispersed within 10 days of receipt of the auditor's final report. The City would continue to hold revenues from out of City rate payers for the last two quarters of 2010. Information on these revenues would be shared with the independent auditor and deducted from the City's share of the Trust Fund.

Relative to the remaining issue regarding water/sewer extensions in the County, we support the concept proposed by TREBIC to establish a Municipal Area of Influence (MAI). The concept of the MAI was reviewed as part of the discussions on merging the Planning Departments of the City and County and is used by some cities and counties in North Carolina. Under this proposal the County would maintain control over the zoning in the MAI, but it would adopt the City's Land Development Ordinance (LDO) and the City's Comprehensive Plan in this area. At no cost to the County, the City would administer the LDO in this area handling zoning enforcement, development reviews, and building inspections. The City would charge, collect and keep fees to cover the cost of these services. Under this approach the City would adopt a policy for extending water and sewer into the MAI only. This approach would save the County money, simplify the development review process and the extension of utilities, create jobs and stimulate the local economy. At the same time, this approach would maintain the County's jurisdiction over zoning, therefore addressing the representation issue raised by the County over extensions of ETJ.

We would recommend we establish the MAI by July 1, 2011. Lastly, if this proposal is accepted by the County, we would suggest we memorialize all the elements of this proposal in a formal agreement.

RWM



April 7, 2011

TO: Rashad M. Young, City Manager
FROM: Sue Schwartz, FAICP, Interim Director
SUBJECT: Boarded-up Housing

The City of Greensboro practices a house-boarding policy that minimizes the number of houses that are boarded and moves as quickly as possible towards repair or demolition. The City takes this approach to balance the need to repair severely dilapidated buildings with the fact that boarded houses can be visible sign of disinvestment and neighborhood decline.

Some key features of City practice:

- The City does not allow property owners to board their own property for any reason, including long-term vacancy;
- Either the City's Local Ordinance Enforcement or Building Inspections can order a house to be boarded under the following circumstances:
 - a repair order issued by Inspectors or by the Minimum Housing Commission;
 - fire damage awaiting insurance action;
 - a vacant building with unlocked or broken windows or doors;
- Greensboro's code is written to follow as closely as possible to the minimum time frames allowed under North Carolina law, though since repair is the main goal, extra time is allowed if progress is being made.
- The number of houses boarded since 2008 (different houses were boarded up each year despite similarities in the numbers):
 - 2008 33
 - 2009 51
 - 2010 51
 - 2011 19

A map is attached showing the location of boarded houses by year from 2008 until now.

Process

The framework for Greensboro's minimum housing code, including the condemning and boarding of houses is dictated by North Carolina law. Generally, this is not a process that is designed to move quickly towards demolition, since this is considered to be a remedy of last resort.

A more detailed timeline of the process is attached, but the major steps in the process as run by Greensboro are as follows.

- **Day 1 Original complaint**
Inspection can be initiated at the request of the owner, tenant, inspector, a government agency, or a petition from 5 residents. This is followed by inspection, title search and other background work.
- **Day 51 Inspector's hearing**
If violations are found, then a hearing is held to discuss the violations. It may be held from 10 to 30 days after the notice of the hearing is announced; Greensboro allows 30 days for thorough notification.
- **Day 52 Repair order**
If violations are found, the inspector can order repairs to be made within 30 days. If the repairs of the structure exceed 50 percent of the value, the inspector will issue a repair or demolish order.
- **Day 82 Order expires**
After a subsequent inspection, the owner may be granted an additional 30 days for repairs. This process may be repeated up to 270 days; the typical length of time is 3 or 4 weeks. If the repairs have still not been completed the inspector will require that the property be condemned. As policy, the tenant is given a 30-day notice to vacate the property.
- **Day 122 Housing Commission hearing and order**
If the inspector determines the owner has abandoned the intent to repair the property, the Greensboro Minimum Standards Housing Commission will hear the case and make a ruling on whether the structure should be demolished or not.
- **Day 212 Housing Commission order expires**
The City of Greensboro has funds in place to demolish structures, if necessary, and collect the expenses from the owner as set forth in North Carolina general statutes.
- **Day 249 Demolition**

Policies in Other North Carolina Cities

Winston-Salem

- allows houses to be boarded for up to six months after City Council issues orders to repair or demolish
- cases do not reach Council until after Inspector's hearing and re-inspection
- Council orders demolition if the cost of repairs is estimated to be more than 65% of the structures value, repairs are ordered if the costs are estimated at less than 65% of value
- the demolition process itself takes approximately 120 days
- has a Neighborhood Improvement Committee that acts like Greensboro's Minimum Housing Commission.

Durham

- allows for houses to be boarded for up to 6 months if there are no violations associated with the property; after this, owners can be fined until the house is un-boarded
- houses with violations have to be repaired or demolished; their process takes between 120 days to a year
- has a Neighborhood Improvement Committee that functions like Greensboro's Minimum Housing Commission.

High Point

- allows property owners to board-up their own houses indefinitely
- under certain situations, vacant houses are ordered to be boarded, and repairs are ordered
- staff members make decisions regarding boarding, vacating and repairing on an ad hoc basis.

Raleigh

- time line that is similar to Greensboro's regarding the initial Inspector's hearing process
- if a violation is found, owners have between 70 to 90 days (depending on if the housing is "unfit" or "unsound") to repair; if the buildings are not secured they are ordered to be boarded-up
- if repairs are not made in this time, then Staff asks City Council for approval to pursue demolition if the necessary repairs are more than 50% of the value of the structure.

Costs and Benefits of Demolition

Improving or demolishing blighted properties can have benefits for neighborhoods and for the City as a whole. However, it is preferable in almost all cases to have a property owner sufficiently repair a house than to demolish it and have a vacant lot. With that in mind, and to respect the productive use of personal property, the City does show deference for work being done to make repairs to a house.

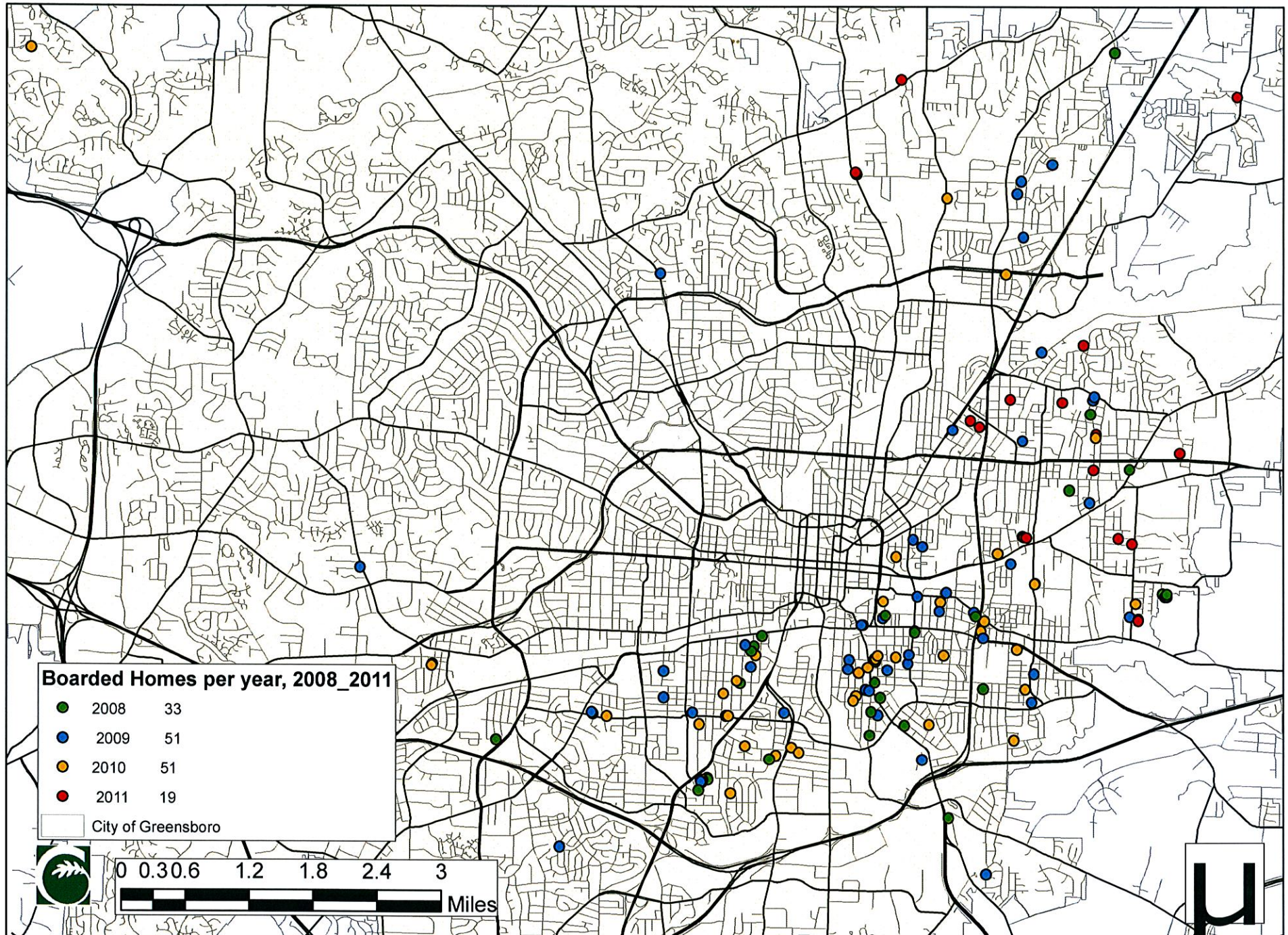
The City can try to force repair rather than demolition by placing a lien on the property and doing the repair work itself, but this requires that the rehabilitation funds be made available out of the City budget. Collecting the funds can be difficult and time consuming, and in many instances, the City would be left owning properties that are difficult to sell.

We are continuing to research best practices in this area, and will update City Council on our research as soon as possible.

SS

Attachment: Map; Timeline

Boarded Houses 2008-2011



Substandard Housing Enforcement Timeline



Houses are boarded for one or more of the following:

- Inspectors order to repair
- Fire Damage – awaiting insurance action
- Repair by owner
- Open and vacant
- Minimum Housing Standards Commission Order

Houses shall not be boarded due to:

1. Vacancy
2. None compliance
3. Owner's option

Boarded houses are a measure of:

- Number houses remodeled (building permit issued)
- Number of houses repaired to standard (order of the MHC)
- Number of houses demolished (by owner or City)
- Number of active housing cases (inspectors order to repair)

Improvement:

While the RUCO Ordinance has been effective in getting multi-family rental property repaired in a timely manner we have not seen the same response from the owners of single family rental units.

Current System:

The current system gives the property owner the maximum time allotted by General Statutes and City of Greensboro Ordinances to effect repairs.

Delays:

1. Inspector action can be appealed to superior court prior to Minimum Housing Commission Order and within 10 days after an Order.
2. Poor service on multiple owners or parties of interest.
3. Notice by Publication.
4. Sporadic work progress.
5. Additional time by the Minimum Housing Commission.

The current system and process is effective for authorizing a house be demolished with full support of staff and the City Attorney. To shorten the time a house is boarded will require the City to Intervene and provide the necessary finances to bring the house into compliance.



April 7, 2011

TO: Rashad M. Young, City Manager

FROM: John Shoffner, Economic Development Manager

SUBJECT: Economic Development Bond Projects Update

The voters of Greensboro approved issuing \$10 Million of bonds at a November 2006 referendum for the purpose of furthering economic development efforts in Greensboro. These bonds provide a source of funds to advance efforts in the areas of job creation, capital investment and neighborhood revitalization. Each project is evaluated on its own merits and considered for approval by City Council on a case by case basis. The order authorizing the bonds limits the City to using the funds for acquiring and approving land for industrial parks and providing infrastructure, such as water, sewer, and street improvements, for other economic development projects. Please see Appendix 1 for a copy of the order authorizing the bonds.

Based on projects that have been authorized by City Council to date, \$5,823,225 of the \$10,000,000 has been committed. \$393,402 of the total committed amount has actually been paid by the City as of today. We anticipate funding another \$1,204,752 in April. The current status of each project is listed below.

The major categories in which the bond funds will be invested in include:

1) Sites for Industrial/Commercial Projects

Use of Funds:

- ❖ Installation of water, sewer and transportation infrastructure.
- ❖ Land Acquisition.

2) ¹Urban Development Investment Guidelines Projects

A portion of the funds will also enable funding of various neighborhood development and redevelopment projects in downtown and reinvestment areas and corridors as defined in the Urban Development Investment Guidelines.

Use of Funds:

- ❖ Installation of water, sewer, storm sewer and transportation infrastructure.
- ❖ Provision of off-street parking.
- ❖ Streetscape improvements.
- ❖ Environmental site assessment.

¹ The Urban Development Investment Guidelines have been adopted by Council and provide a consistent framework as to how projects will be evaluated and what types of projects are eligible for consideration.

- ❖ Site Preparation.
- ❖ Affordable housing assistance.

As projects manifest themselves, the city will apply a thorough due diligence process to evaluate the merits of each investment. Projects must demonstrate financial viability and a need for public participation. The community can expect projects moving forward with public participation to demonstrate an acceptable return on the public investment in the way of increased tax base, new/retained jobs, and enhanced quality of life.

It is noteworthy that should any of the bond funds be used for the acquisition of land, the City will recover its investment and replenish the fund over time upon the sale or lease of the land to a developer/tenant. Having bond funds available enables the City to proactively make selected infrastructure investments in anticipation of new corporate relocation/expansion projects.

Projects approved to date include:

- SCD I, LLC - Approved for an ED bond grant of **\$542,920** to participate in transportation infrastructure improvement costs associated with creating a new development ready office park in Greensboro's Urban Progress Zone.

Status: Project is underway. No invoices have been submitted yet for the work to be funded by the City.

Payments: \$0.00

- Piedmont Triad Airport Authority - Approved for an ED bond grant of **\$1,564,000** to participate in water & sewer infrastructure costs necessary to bring 200 additional acres of airport authority property with runway access to development ready status. This project was also approved for \$1.218 Million from the City's Water & Sewer Capital Improvements Fund and \$1.8 Million from the City-County Joint Water & Sewer Trust Fund.

Status: Project is underway. No invoices have been submitted yet for the work to be funded by the Economic Development Bond.

Payments: \$0.00

- Boulder Road Industrial Development - Approved for an ED bond grant of **\$500,000** to assist in water & sewer infrastructure improvements necessary to bring 41 additional acres (2 new industrial sites) to development ready status.

Status: Project is complete. An invoice has been submitted for \$500,000. We are completing our due diligence of the request for payment and will be paying if all is in order.

Payments: \$0.00

- McConnell Center Corporate Park - Approved for an ED bond grant of **\$1,086,305** to participate in sewer and transportation infrastructure improvements required to bring 140 acres in east Greensboro (4 new industrial sites) to development ready status.

Status: Project is complete. Payment has been made for the sewer infrastructure. Invoice has been submitted for the remaining \$704,752 in transportation infrastructure improvements. This will be paid upon satisfactory completion of our due diligence on the payment request and perfection of the City's lien on the development.

Payments: \$381,553.

- GTCC Northwest Campus - Approved for an ED bond grant of **\$1,000,000** to participate in providing water and sewer infrastructure necessary for the development of Guilford Technical Community College's Northwest campus.

Status: The portion of the project to be funded by the bond has not started. No invoices have been submitted. We anticipate paying this item between March and August of 2012.

Payments: \$0.00

- Kisco Continuing Care Retirement Center - Approved for an ED bond grant of **\$1,000,000** to participate in providing adequate sewer service for the development of a \$107 Million continuing care retirement community and the creation of 125 new jobs.

Status: Project has not started. No invoices have been submitted yet for the work to be funded by the City.

Payments: \$0.00

- Western Area Infrastructure and Land Use Plan - Approved for ED bond funds of **\$130,000** to fund an analysis that will encompass growth areas on the city's western fringe, following the boundaries for the proposed Water and Sewer Service Area Plan already being prepared by the City of Greensboro Water Resources Department. This area is experiencing extreme development pressure and this Plan for land use and infrastructure will provide more detailed analysis for land use allocations and the guidelines to implement the quality development required by the Comprehensive Plan.

Status: Plan is underway. Two invoices have been submitted to date and paid.

Payments: \$11,849

Appendix 1:

ORDER AUTHORIZING \$10,000,000 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BONDS

BE IT ORDERED by the City Council of the City of Greensboro:

1. That, pursuant to The Local Government Bond Act, as amended, the City of Greensboro, North Carolina, is hereby authorized to contract a debt, in addition to any and all other debt which said City may now or hereafter have power or authority to contract, and in evidence thereof to issue Economic Development Bonds in an aggregate principal amount not exceeding \$10,000,000 for the purpose of providing funds, together with any other available funds, for acquiring and improving land for industrial parks and providing infrastructure, such as water and sewer and street improvements, for other economic development projects.

2. That taxes shall be levied in an amount sufficient to pay the principal of and the interest on said bonds.

3. That a sworn statement of the debt of said City has been filed with the City Clerk and is open to public inspection.

4. That this order shall take effect when approved by the voters of said City at a referendum as provided in said Act.

Guilford Metro 9-1-1
City of Greensboro



March 30, 2011

TO: Michael Speedling, Assistant City Manager
FROM: Wesley E. Reid, Guilford Metro 9-1-1 Director
SUBJECT: Radio System Subscriber Product Leasing

In 1994, the City of Greensboro procured 800 MHz subscriber product (portable and mobile radios) to provide for public safety and local governmental communications needs. These subscriber units are now being phased out due to parts unavailability and technology obsolescence. In September 2010, GM911 provided an update on our progress with the multi-year FCC mandated rebanding process. This process helped replace a fraction of the aging portable and mobile equipment of the Greensboro Police Department. The replacement equipment was primarily paid for by Sprint/Nextel however the GM911 Technical Services Division provided additional funding to upgrade the radios to existing operational standards. Approximately 1200+ subscriber products remained in need of immediate replacement.

An outright purchase of 1200+ subscriber products would cost an estimated \$3.75 million. Research performed by the Technical Services Division, as well as, an independent communications consulting firm (TSS Partners, Inc) indicated that the most advantageous method to replace the remaining 1200+ subscriber units was through an operational lease. This option allowed us to spread payments over a seven year term. This process creates a specific annual cost that can be factored in the users' budgets, thereby eliminating sudden one time capital expenses for the replacement of radios. At the end of the lease, the subscriber product (which will be at its end of lifecycle with little to no residual value) will be returned. Furthermore, based on internal reviews and consultant recommendations we should plan on replacement of subscriber product every six to eight years. The future replacement of these leased radios will coincide with our ongoing planning to replace the aging City/County 800 MHz infrastructure and potentially partner with surrounding counties to build out a regional radio network solution.

Our plan is to move forward with operational leases of public safety and non public safety subscriber product here forth. This allows us to forecast projected annual costs to our users without incurring substantial capital expenses and reducing the probability of parts unavailability and technology obsolescence by routinely upgrading subscriber product.

WER

Parks & Recreation Department
City of Greensboro



April 8, 2011

TO: Denise Turner, Assistant City Manager

FROM: Greg Jackson, Director

SUBJECT: Greensboro Farmers' Market RFP – Interview Date

The Farmers' Market Requests for Proposal (RFP) review committee will interview the three shortlisted proposers on Tuesday, April 26, 2011, beginning at 6 p.m. The interviews will take place in the Blair Richmond Conference Room, located at The Learning Center, 1004 Fourth Street. The goal for this meeting is for the committee to interview the three proposers and to formulate a recommendation on which group, if any, is best suited to manage the Greensboro Farmers' Curb Market. The recommendation will then be taken to the May 11, 2011, Parks and Recreation Commission and the May 17, 2011, City Council meeting for consideration.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know.

GJ

cc: Dan Maxson, Administration Division Manager